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April 28, 2004

TO: SFRB Members and Designees

FROM: Steve Leider, SRFB Review Panel Liaison and Team Leader

SUBJECT: 5TH ROUND SPRING REVIEW PANEL MEETINGS WITH LEAD ENTITIES – OBSERVATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (Board) with a general summary of observations stemming from initial meetings between the Review Panel and lead entities held at various locations the state from March 22 to April 13.

Included in this memo are two sets of comments. First, in the body of this memo are general comments from staff. Second, you will find two attachments from the Review Panel. Attachment 1 is an outline of some general Review Panel observations and comments. Attachment 2 is a table documenting each lead entity meeting and providing some lead entity-specific considerations.

It was clear from information provided at the meetings that considerable progress is being made by lead entities in strategy development and use. For example, most lead entities appear to be using strategies to some extent to solicit projects. In addition, most lead entities found the *Guide to Lead Entity Strategy Development (Guide)* helpful – noting it provides more and clearer guidance than previously available.

A key staff observation is that in general, there is a likelihood that ratings from the Review Panel on strategy focus and specificity will be clustered together at a higher level and to a greater extent than may have been originally anticipated. Pending ratings associated with fit of project lists to strategies, this may mean that results from Review Panel ratings will not provide as much ability to discern between lead entity efforts as was previously thought.

Other staff observations and considerations:

- Considerable variation was observed across lead entities regarding the type and extent of information gaps and technical tools used.
- Challenges and opportunities afforded by multiple and overlapping planning processes (competing for common lead entity staff resources) were apparent. These processes include watershed planning, subbasin planning and regional recovery planning.
- The Review Panel may have difficulty interpreting materials provided by lead entities that are not well aligned with the evaluation topics/questions that the Review Panel will follow in its rating process. It is recognized that the extent to which strategies are revised is up to each lead entity.
 - *The Board may want to stress to lead entities the value of using the Strategy Summary to guide the Review Panel to relevant areas of the strategy and other documents and to provide other information important to the Review Panel's review and rating process.*
- Much variation was observed in the extent to which the specific questions in the *Guide* and in the 5th Round Grants Manual affected how community interests were addressed in lead entity strategies and project solicitation processes. In general, community interests and processes are described. However, relatively few lead entities described how community interests were used to solicit or rank projects specifically addressing needs in areas/activities of high technical priority.
 - *The Board may want to remind the lead entities to use the Guide to help understand what the RP will be looking for in evaluating community issues.*
- Lead entities in which nearshore areas predominate appeared to have difficulty interpreting and following the *Guide*. This may be because the *Guide* was developed primarily with watersheds - not nearshore areas - in mind, and because considerably less information is available for nearshore areas than for freshwater portions of watersheds.
 - *The Board may want to consider clarifying how the Guide relates to nearshore situations.*
- The habitat-forming/watershed processes were infrequently addressed, receiving little emphasis compared to habitat conditions/features, their assessment tools and information. This may be due to a general lack of information on watershed processes, or to the tendencies of the assessment and modeling tools used.

Other thoughts and reminders for the next phase of RP work:

- To assist the Board's decision-making at the December 2-3 meeting, the following will be provided for each lead entity project list:
 - Ratings from the Review Panel for each of six categories – four pertaining to strategy specificity and focus, and two to fit of project list to strategy

- Narratives from the Review Panel for each rating, and an overall narrative
 - Findings from the Technical Advisors regarding projects that they believe are not technically sound
 - Strategy summaries provided by the lead entity
 - The lead entity's answers to the six questions regarding strategy specificity and fit of the project list to the strategy
 - One-page summaries for each project
- Review Panel ratings will only address status of strategies for the current round. Review Panel evaluation criteria do not provide for or seek information on the extent of lead entity progress (or lack of it) in strategy development and use from past rounds to this round.
 - *The Board may want to consider a mechanism to address relative progress as a criterion outside the Review Panel evaluation process.*
 - *Alternatively, if desired by the Board, the Review Panel could seek and include information on progress in narrative form.*
 - The Review Panel will not evaluate how "good" a strategy is, other than perhaps by indirectly assessing "quality" of strategies through ratings of specificity and focus. This presumes that for the 5th Round, specificity and focus serve as surrogates of quality for strategies provided. The Board accepts the risk that there may be circumstances of a good fit to specific and focused, but weak, strategies.
 - The Review Panel may have difficulty rating some strategies that have not been substantially updated for the 5th Round, in contrast to those that have been, due simply to extent of transparency available to the Review Panel in the context of the *Guide* and Review Panel rating criteria. However, where strategies are not updated, it is expected that new information will be brought forward or referenced in the required strategy summaries as outlined in the 5th Round Grants Manual and in the fall meetings with the Review Panel. The Review Panel will make rating determinations using information from strategies, strategy summaries, information provided at the Review Panel meetings with lead entities in the fall, and reports on projects from technical advisors. The extent to which information is presented in the summaries but is not thoroughly documented in strategies or elsewhere can be included in Review Panel narratives.

We hope you and the lead entities will find these and the Review Panel's comments informative and useful at this juncture in the 5th Round process.

Attachments:

1. General observations of the 2004 Review Panel from spring meetings with lead entities
2. Review Panel spring 2004 meetings with lead entities

Attachment 1

General observations of the 2004 Review Panel from spring meetings with lead entities

- Most lead entities are moving along a continuum from an "opportunistic" approach (evaluating and ranking projects that come in the door) toward a "strategic" approach (guiding sponsors to projects that address the highest priority issues and areas), but they are at different points along that continuum. The more explicit the criteria and requirements (including community interests) are stated during the lead entity's solicitation of proposals, the more likely it will be that the resulting projects will be consistent with the strategy. Vague strategies without clear priorities make the evaluation dependent on the reactions of committees to specific projects, which leans more toward the opportunistic approach. That makes it more difficult for sponsors and the SRFB Review Panel to determine fit-to-strategy.
- Many lead entities have done extensive assessments using a variety of tools and approaches. In some cases, it is not entirely clear how potential project sponsors can use the assessment information to identify and propose the highest priority actions. The more specific a lead entity strategy is in guiding sponsors toward the most strategic projects, the easier it will be for the SRFB Review Panel to understand how the project list fits with the strategy.
- Detailed tables, spreadsheets, and maps showing limiting factors and habitat conditions appear to be very useful to lead entities and people engaged in watershed and salmon recovery planning. However, some potential project sponsors might not have the resources or background to fully review and interpret this level of detail. Some lead entities have sought to address this issue with summaries, meetings with project sponsors, and even lists of specific projects in areas that are consistent with the highest priorities in the strategy.
- Some lead entity strategies draw from more than one model or approach, and some include both instream habitat conditions and larger-area watershed processes. To aid transparency, it may help in some of these cases to be more explicit about how each of the methods was used, how they differ, and how recommended actions tie back to one method or another.
- Some lead entity strategies are reasonably clear about the kinds of projects that might not be supported by the community. Some even exclude certain potential projects from consideration (e.g., removal of major infrastructure or acquisition of agricultural land). Others might be less clear to potential project proponents, perhaps indicating that community interests will be weighed by the citizens committee, but not saying what those interests are. While community interests and support for projects do inevitably shift over time, including as much guidance from

lead entities as possible, may make it easier for sponsors to propose projects that will have support, and may also make it easier to determine the fit of the project list to the strategy.

- Some lead entities have included community interests explicitly in their evaluation criteria and processes, giving bonus points to projects that support other community priorities in addition to salmon habitat restoration (e.g., flood control, recreation). This may be an effective approach for building and sustaining community support.
- If a lead entity relies only on the citizen committee discussion to incorporate community interests, it will help to clarify how that guides project sponsors.
- Many lead entities use systems that weight scientific and social criteria. The range in weights for the scientific element range from 50 - 95%. It may be useful for others to use such criteria and describe how the weights were selected and applied.
- Some lead entities identify different priority areas for restoration than for protection. Others used the same priority areas. While this latter approach is clear, it would be useful to include explicit rationale so that it is clear how this makes sense in the specific watersheds. There may be scenarios where the most important watersheds for restoration would not be the most important for protection and vice versa.
- Some strategies include explicit, measurable goals (e.g., acres or miles of habitat and numbers of fish). Others are oriented to making progress or improvements. Either approach can work, but in a general sense the former approach is useful in a monitoring and evaluation context to be able to determine when enough work has been completed in the top priority areas so that effort can shift toward the next highest priorities.
- Some lead entities have not yet included explicit information about stock status, priorities, and community interests.
- It would help if lead entities were more explicit about choices that were not made (and why).
- It would help to clearly articulate linkages between the scientific body of knowledge used (e.g., whether limiting factors analysis, EDT, other technical information sources, and/or local committee knowledge) and priority areas, including any criteria used to identify priority areas (e.g., restore processes before function, or protect threatened areas first).
- Some watersheds along the Columbia River, Puget Sound, and the coast explicitly recognized that they provide important habitat functions for populations that spawn in other watersheds. Any progress toward determining the relative importance of conditions in these migratory corridors relative to the natal watersheds will continue

to be useful. In addition, prioritizing within these areas may be more useful in guiding projects than just including, for example, all nearshore as a top priority.

Attachment 2

Review Panel Spring 2004 Meetings with Lead Entities

Date	Lead Entity	Presenters (*), participants, (observers)	5 th Round strategy final or in revision?	Considerations for Lead Entities
3/22/04	Whatcom Co.	*John Thompson, *Steve Seymour, Ned Currence, Marc Duboiski (Laura Johnson, Jim Fox, Brian Walsh)	Nearly final – expect completion within next few weeks	Based on the assessment data, consider bolstering clarification of what the highest priority projects would be.
	San Juan Co.	*David Hoopes, Steve Seymour, Gary Woods, Marc Duboiski (Laura Johnson, Jim Fox, Brian Walsh)	Revision in progress	Lead entity expressed that it is hard to use freshwater-oriented approach/guidance for nearshore situations; limited nearshore information is available. Consider clarifying what stocks and priorities should be used to guide project sponsors. Consider linkages with Island County efforts.
	Skagit Watershed Council	*Shirley Solomon, *Ben Perkowski, Marc Duboiski (Laura Johnson, Jim Fox, Brian Walsh)	Final	
	Island Co.	*Kim Bredensteiner, Larry Bock, Rich Johnson, Darla Boyer, Sego Jackson, Marc Duboiski (Laura Johnson, Jim Fox, Brian Walsh)	Revision in progress	Lead entity expressed concern that it is hard to use freshwater- oriented approach/guidance for nearshore situations; limited nearshore information is available, but increasing. Consider clarifying how community priorities will influence overall project priorities. Consider linkages with San Juan County efforts.
3/23	Snohomish Co.	*Martha Neuman, Stephanie Kaknes, Marc Duboiski (Laura Johnson, Jim Fox, Brian Walsh)	Final – use interim criteria	Consider clarifying linkages to Review Panel evaluation criteria in strategy summary (with cross- references to strategy documents). Consider clarifying where focus areas from past rounds may differ from current priority reaches.

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Date	Lead Entity	Presenters (*), participants, (observers)	5 th Round strategy final or in revision?	Considerations for Lead Entities
	King 8 (Lk Washington Cedar Sammamish)	*Jane Lamensdorf-Bucher, *Jean White, *Brian Murray, John Lafroge, Kristi Silver, Marc Duboiski (Laura Johnson, Jim Fox, Brian Walsh)	Final	Consider bolstering clarification of project evaluation criteria and documenting assumptions or the basis of analysis tools as they relate to restoration potential or priorities.
	King 9 (Green Duwamish)	*Jen Rice, *Doug Osterman, Bob Fuerstenberg, Loren Rail, Marc Duboiski (Laura Johnson, Jim Fox)	In revision - minor changes only	Consider clarifying strategy linkages to matrix and providing priority stock information in matrix tables.
	Stillaguamish	*Aaron Waller, Pat Stevenson, Marc Duboiski	Final	
3/29	Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board	*Jeff Breckel, *Gary Wade, Melody Tereski, Lee Van Tussenbrook, Bill Dygert, Randy Sweet (Laura Johnson, Barb McIntosh)	In revision - minor changes only	Consider clarifying higher-level project evaluation criteria to complement project scoring criteria. Consider bolstering clarification of how assessments are consistent with the strategy.
3/30	Yakima River Basin Salmon Recovery Board	*Richard Visser, Frank Sweet, Scott Nicolai, Marc Duboiski (Brenda McMurray, Jim Fox, Kristi Lynett)	In revision – minor changes only	Consider bolstering clarification of situations when the strategy prioritizes actions that are different from the initial technical models, including whether that situation arises due to a different understanding of the science or due to community interests.
	Klickitat Co.	*Dave McClure, Dan Lichtenwald, Scott Nicolai, Marc Duboiski (Brenda McMurray, Jim Fox, Kristi Lynett)	Revision in progress	Consider additional clarification of technical and other tools, basis and criteria, relationships between technical and citizens committee activities, and rank-tier relationships.

Date	Lead Entity	Presenters (*), participants, (observers)	5 th Round strategy final or in revision?	Considerations for Lead Entities
3/31	Snake River Salmon Recovery Board	*Steve Martin, *Brad Johnson, Terry Bruegman, Rick Jones, Bob Hutchens, Jerry Hendrickson, Rick Stauty, Kathy LaRoque, Duane Bartels, Rollie Geppert (Kristi Lynett)	Uncertain	Consider clarifying biological priorities deemed infeasible (and rationale), linkages between imminent threats and tiers, watershed processes and relationships to identified priority habitat factors/areas, and non-technical issues that can affect project rankings.
4/9	Upper Columbia – Chelan	*Julie Dagnon, Britt Dudek, Keith Wolf, Jennifer Jerabek, *Carmen Andronegui, Sammy Buzzard, Joe Kelly, Rollie Geppert, Tara Galuska, (Dick Wallace, Laura Johnson)	Revision in progress	<p>Consider additional clarification of how overall process works within each lead entity list and between lead entities, how the Regional Technical Team (RTT) relates to citizen committees, how projects move forward based on RTT and citizen committee input, prioritization of assessment units, prioritization of listed/non-listed species, where watershed processes fit in the context of limiting factors/habitat factor assessments and responses, the types of projects associated with community interest qualities, and the basis of technical information if it has changed since the last round.</p> <p>Chelan – consider clarifying criteria for core and different categories of projects.</p> <p>Consider clarifying the utility of splitting numerical scores 1-5 into H/M/L.</p> <p>Consider relationships of past projects to this year's projects year.</p>
	Upper Columbia – Foster Creek CD			
	Upper Columbia – Okanogan Co. and Colville Tribe			
	Pend Oreille	*Scott Jungblom, Sandy Lembcke, Rollie Geppert, Tara Galuska, (Laura Johnson)	Revision in progress	Consider clarifying community support ratings (e.g., better define what "low" means), limiting factor habitat terms in Table 1, and placing Table earlier in flow of strategy.

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Date	Lead Entity	Presenters (*), participants, (observers)	5 th Round strategy final or in revision?	Considerations for Lead Entities
4/12	Mason/Thurston Co.	*Amy Hatch-Winecka, Chad Stussy, Rollie Geppert, Brian Abbott, (Mike Ramsey, Brian Walsh, Kristi Lynett)	Revision in progress	Strategy not available for meeting. Consider emphasis on clarifying prioritization schemes, and rationale/basis for hypotheses.
	Pierce Co.	*Roy Huberd, Dave Renstrom, Dave Seabrook, Rollie Geppert, Brian Abbott (Mike Ramsey, Laura Johnson, Brian Walsh, John Sims, Larry Guilbertson)	Final	Consider clarifying how Commencement Bay was prioritized in context of nearshore areas (related to mapped area), approach and steps toward long-term strategy actions, analysis of cost-benefit, species prioritization, relationships to other efforts (e.g., Puget Sound Shared Strategy, watershed planning, local coordination).
	Quinault Nation	*John Sims, Larry Guilbertson, Brian Abbott (Mike Ramsey, Brian Walsh, Kristi Lynett)	Revision under consideration	Consider clarifying who is represented on technical and citizen committees, bolstering description of technical rationale including analyses leading to priority areas and actions at the various levels, and bolstering community issues sections of strategy. Suggest further consideration of SRFB 5 th Round Grant Manual and related strategy guidance, and consider use of maps or tables to help depict priority actions, areas, and rationales.
	Kitsap Co.	*Monica Daniels, Jim Bolger, Paul Dorn, Allen Miller, Mike Ramsey (Kristi Lynett, Brian Walsh, David Renstrom, Richard Brocksmith)	Final – but more info will be provided	Consider clarifying how watershed tiers are linked to benefit and certainty assessments (use of footnotes and sidebar text tables may assist), and the process used to prioritize species. Suggest adding nearshore header to Appendix B table.
	Hood Canal Coord. Council	*Richard Brocksmith, Rollie Geppert, Mike Ramsey (Brian Walsh, Kristi Lynett)	Final	Consider clarifying presentation of final priorities and using the tiers/priorities analysis as background to reduce the potential for confusion.

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Date	Lead Entity	Presenters (*), participants, (observers)	5 th Round strategy final or in revision?	Considerations for Lead Entities
4/13	Nisqually River Council	*Jeanette Dorner, *David Troutt, Sara Hodgson, Tom Kants, Chad Stussy, Rollie Geppert (Brian Walsh, Margen Carlsen)	Final	Consider clarification of the broader context of other efforts/activities related to SRFB projects in watershed (e.g., Ft. Lewis, highway), and watershed processes and their relationship to habitat limiting factors and conditions. Consider clarification of the presentation of final priorities clearly and using the tiers/priorities analysis as background.
	Pacific Co.	*Mike Johnson, Don Eman, Rollie Geppert, Brian Abbott (Margen Carlsen)	Final	Consider clarifying the relationships of specific data assessment needs in each watershed to the overall strategy, and identify community interests that may prevent satisfying these data gaps and treating limiting factors in an area such as Willapa Bay.
	NOPL	*Selinda Barkhuis, *Randy Johnson, Paula Macrow, Mike Ramsey (Brian Abbott, Brian Walsh, Margen Carlsen, Marnie Tyler)	In revision - minor changes only	Consider clarifying how Technical Review Group and Citizens Facilitation Group scores, ranks, and comments go to the Lead Entity Group and are weighed together in achieving the project list.
	Grays Harbor	*Lee Napier, Lonnie Crumley, Chad Stussy, Rollie Geppert, Brian Abbott (Margen Carlsen, Brian Walsh, Marnie Tyler)	Final	Consider use of map products to help display priority areas and associated types of projects.